

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-11

ACDA-05 SAJ-01 OMB-01 /077 W  
----- 034493

R 091540Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5551

INFO USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 00415

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, GW, WB, US FR, UK, UR

SUBJECT: PROPOSED MEETING OF BUNDESTAG COUNCIL OF  
ELDERS IN BERLIN

REFS: (A) STATE 2117; (B) USBER 09; (C) BONN 20862

SUMMARY: AT JAN. 7 BONN GROUP MEETING ALLIES INFORMED  
FRG OF RESPECTIVE PRESENT INSTRUCTIONS ON PROPOSED  
COUNCIL OF ELDERS (CE) MEETING IN BERLIN. ALLIED  
POSITIONS VERY CLOSE WITH MAJOR DIFFERENCE BEING THAT UK  
MAINTAINS 1974 STAND THAT IT COULD JUSTIFY CE  
MEETING IN BERLIN TO SOVIETS ONLY ON GROUNDS IT IS  
A BUNDESTAG COMMITTEE MEETING THERE IN CONNECTION WITH  
TIES. FRG REP SAID HE SHARED ALLIED CONCERNS,  
PARTICULARLY SINCE BUNDESTAG ASPECT OF BERLIN AFFAIRS  
HAS BEEN RELATIVELY QUIET VIS-A-VIS THE SOVIETS. HE  
WOULD REPORT DISCUSSION TO CHANCELLERY FOR FORWARDING TO  
BUNDESTAG PRESIDENT RENGEL. END SUMMARY.

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1. FRG REP AT JAN. 7 BONN GROUP MEETING OPENED

DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED COUNCIL OF ELDERS (CE) MEETING IN BERLIN BY PASSING OUT COPIES OF APRIL 1975 EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN BUNDESTAG PRESIDENT RENGER AND CDU BERLIN DEPUTY WOHLRABE. THE LETTERS CONSIST OF WOHLRABE'S DEMAND THAT BUNDESTAG PRESIDUM AND CE BE SCHEDULED TO MEET IN BERLIN AND RENGER'S REPLY REGRETTING HE HAD PUBLICIZED DEMAND AND INDICATING SHE WAS PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH HIM. LUECKING SAID WOHLRABE HAD NEVER FOLLOWED UP AND NO RENGER-WOHLRABE DISCUSSION EVER TOOK PLACE.

2. LUECKING THEN REQUESTED ALLIED RESPONSE TO QUESTION OF POSSIBLE CE MEETING IN BERLIN. HE THOUGHT THAT RENGER HAD SHOWN POLITICAL COURAGE IN HOLDING OFF WOHLRABE, BUT THAT IT MIGHT BE DIFFICULT TO MAINTAIN ALLIED-FRG POSITION THAT SUCH MEETINGS ARE LEGALLY PERMISSIBLE BUT POLITICALLY INOPPORTUNE. LUECKING EMPHASIZED THAT A COMMON POSITION SHOULD BE REACHED SOON.

3. US REP REPORTED INSTRUCTIONS (REFTELS). HE ADDED THAT PREVIOUS PURPOSE OF CE MEETINGS IN BERLIN, IN CONNECTION WITH BUNDESTAG WORK WEEKS, NO LONGER EXISTED, AND SAID US FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO SEE ANY REAL REASON FOR CE TO MEET IN BERLIN NOW. FRENCH REP (BOISSIEU) SAID FRENCH POSITION WAS CLOSE TO US. HE WISHED TO MAKE FOLLOWING POINTS:

--A) FRENCH, AS IN 1974, CONSIDER CE MEETINGS IN BERLIN TO BE COMPATIBLE WITH RELEVANT PROVISIONS OF QA;

--B) SUCH MEETING NOW WOULD BE A BAD THING BECAUSE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN RATHER QUIET ON BUNDESTAG AND BUNDESRAT MEETINGS IN BERLIN;

--C) REPLY TO ANY SOVIET PROTEST ON A CE MEETING IN BERLIN COULD BE DIFFICULT SINCE ALLIES ARE NOT AGREED ON LEGAL JUSTIFICATION FOR MEETING. (NOTE: A REFERENCE TO UK POSITION THAT MEETING MUST BE JUSTIFIED AS COMMITTEE SESSION);

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--D) SO FAR ONLY WOHLRABE HAD MADE A FUSS OVER CE MEETINGS, WHICH SUGGESTS THAT POLITICAL PRESSURES REALLY NOT GREAT;

--E) THERE IS NO BENEFIT TO BERLIN IN CE MEETINGS THERE; AND

--F) BECAUSE OF UK POSITION THAT MEETING BE IN

CONNECTION WITH "TIES," ONLY POSSIBLE JUSTIFICATION IS REICHSTAG BUILDING ADMINISTRATION, WHICH WOULD NOT BE THE IDEAL REASON TO GIVE THE SOVIETS.

4. UK REP (HITCH) SAID BRITISH BELIEVED IT LARGELY UP TO FRG TO JUDGE WHETHER TO GO AHEAD WITH MEETING. THE

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5552

INFO USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 00415

UK CONSIDERED THE CE A COMMITTEE "AT LEAST FOR THIS PURPOSE," AND A BERLIN MEETING WOULD THEREFORE HAVE TO BE IN CONNECTION WITH THE TIES BETWEEN THE FRG AND THE WSB. HITCH AGREED THAT REICHSTAG BUILDING WAS NOT VERY FAVORABLE BASIS FOR MEETING, AND EMPHASIZED THAT DIFFERENCE IN ALLIED LEGAL POSITIONS WOULD MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO REACH EARLY AGREEMENT ON DEFINITIVE POSITION BEFORE JAN. 16 WHEN QUESTION OF BERLIN MEETING WOULD BE CONSIDERED BY CE.

5. ALL ALLIED REPS EMPHASIZED THAT DISPARATE ALLIED LEGAL VIEWS WOULD INDEED MAKE REPLY TO ANY SOVIET PROTEST VERY DIFFICULT. IT WOULD SEEM TO BE NECESSARY TO HAVE AGREED CONTINGENCY REPLY ON HAND BEFORE ANY BERLIN CE MEETING WAS ANNOUNCED, TO AVOID THE 1974 EXPERIENCE OF DEVOTING WEEKS TO REACHING AN AGREED REPLY TO THE SOVIET PROTEST.

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6. LUECKING SAID HE SHARED ALLIED CONCERN. IF THE CE WERE TO MEET IN BERLIN THE RELATIVE QUIET WITH THE SOVIETS ON PARLIAMENTARY MEETINGS IN BERLIN WOULD BE OVER. THIS WAS AN ARGUMENT HE WOULD USE IN HIS REPORT OF DISCUSSION TO THE CHANCELLERY, WHICH WOULD THEN GET IN TOUCH WITH FRAU RENGEL. LUECKING ADDED THAT THE SITUATION ON FRG SIDE NOW WAS DIFFERENT FROM EARLY 1974, WHEN ISSUE LAST CURRENT. THE GOVERNMENT IN MEANTIME HAD WORKED HARD WITH PARLIAMENTARIANS, WITH SOME SUCCESS, TO MAKE THEM AWARE OF THE COMPLEXITIES OF THE BERLIN SITUATION.

7. COMMENT: BECAUSE NOT ALL ALLIED REPS HAD RECEIVED FULL AND FINAL INSTRUCTIONS FROM AUTHORITIES, ABOVE-REPORTED DISCUSSION WAS CHARACTERIZED AS "PRELIMINARY." FOLLOW-UP WILL BE HELD AT BONN GROUP MEETING OF JAN. 13. WE EXPECT NO CHANGES IN ANY POSITIONS. REGARDING OUTLOOK, WE ARE MILDLY OPTIMISTIC. ALL FOUR BONN GROUP REPS SHARE GRAVE DOUBTS ABOUT CE BERLIN MEETING, AND FRG FONOFF DESIRE NOT TO BREAK THE RELATIVE SOVIET CALM RE BERLIN MAY PREVAIL. IT SEEMS TO US THAT ANOTHER KEY WILL BE WHETHER ANY OF WOHLRABE'S OPPOSITION COLLEAGUES FROM THE FRG WILL JOIN WHAT IS SO FAR A ONE-MAN CAMPAIGN. THIS WILL BE CLEARER AFTER THE JAN. 16 CE MEETING.  
HILLENBRAND

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## Message Attributes

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